



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/218,119	12/21/1998	ANDREW M. PROEHL	80398-P158	3529

7590

11/06/2002

BLAKELY SOKOLOFF TAYLOR & ZAFMAN
12400 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD 7TH FLOOR
LOS ANGELES, CA 90025

EXAMINER

LONSBERRY, HUNTER B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2611

DATE MAILED: 11/06/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

B

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/218,119

Applicant(s)

PROEHL ET AL.

Examiner

Hunter B. Lonsberry

Art Unit

2611

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 August 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-60 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-60 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 December 1998 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 19-20, 23-34, 38, 40-42, 50-52, and 54-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,699,107 to Lawler in view of U.S. Patent 5,990,927 to Hendricks.

Regarding claim 1, Lawler discloses a program reminder system in which a user designates a program which they are interested in, retrieves program information related to that program, and prior to the program broadcast, a reminder signal is sent to the user to notify the user of the program broadcast (column 10-line 60-column 11, line 17, 30-39, column 12, 35-55). Lawler does not disclose storing the program information local to the viewer. Hendricks discloses a EPG and reminder system which retrieves program information from the headend, a user selects a program which they wish to record (Figure 15), the recording information is stored locally to later be sent to a VCR, prior to the recording time a reminder screen (Figure 22) is displayed (column 33, lines 34-58, column 40, lines 55-column 41, line 60). Therefore, it would have been obvious

Art Unit: 2611

to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify Lawler to store the reminder information locally as taught by Hendricks thereby allowing a user to view a reminder and watch a program even if the network connection between a STB and the headend is severed.

Regarding claim 2, Lawler discloses a program reminder system that a user tunes to a new channel in response to the program reminder notification (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 3, Lawler discloses in Figure 9, a program reminder system that displays a reminder notification.

Regarding claim 4, Lawler discloses in Figure 9, a program reminder system that displays a reminder notification and allows a user to select to view the program (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 5, Lawler discloses in Figure 2 an action key 70, which is used to select the television program (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 6, Lawler discloses a program reminder system that displays a reminder notification and allows a user to select to view the program upon pushing a button 70 (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 7, Lawler discloses a program reminder system, which displays a reminder to a user several minutes before each designated program is to start (column 12, lines 53-63).

Regarding claim 9, Lawler discloses in Figure 6, a program guide with a reminder button 140 which a user uses to create a future program reminder event (column 13, lines 7-16).

Regarding claim 10, Lawler discloses in Figure 6, a program guide calendar which a user may use to set a reminder to watch a show in the future by pressing a remind button 140.

Regarding claims 19 and 49, Lawler discloses in Figure 2, a set top box 18 with an analog decoder 42 for decoding broadcast TV, a network communication interface 56 for decoding control signals from the headend, a CPU 58 which delivers or requests information to/from the headend and controls selection of programming as well as the program guide (column 6, lines 7-31) column 7, lines 8-16). Hendricks discloses a EPG and reminder system which retrieves program information from the headend, a user selects a program which they wish to record (Figure 15), the recording information is stored locally to later be sent to a VCR, prior to the recording time a reminder screen (Figure 22) is displayed (column 33, lines 34-58, column 40, lines 55-column 41, line 60). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify Lawler to store the reminder information locally as taught by Hendricks thereby allowing a user to view a reminder and watch a program even if the network connection between a STB and the headend is severed.

Regarding claim 20, Lawler discloses that CPU 58, which is responsible for operation of set top box 18, generates a second reminder 5 asking if the user has an interest in the program (column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63, Figure 4).

Regarding claims 23 and 24, Lawler discloses in Figure 9, a program reminder system that displays a TV program reminder in a window prior to the beginning of a program. Lawler also discloses in Figures 6 a program guide (Figure 6) with a remind button 140 and cancel button 132. The combined system of Lawler and Hendricks does not disclose a reminder system, which includes a button in the notification window, but instead utilizes a button 70 on the remote control when then tunes to the program with the reminder (column 13, lines 1-6). Therefore it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify the combined system of Lawler and Hendricks to display a button to indicate interest instead pressing a button on the remote control thereby reducing the number of buttons on a remote control and increase usability of the system

Regarding claim 25, Lawler discloses a program reminder system, which provides a second reminder five seconds before the program's start time; the user can then tune to the program (column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63).

Regarding claim 26, Lawler discloses in Figure 2, a video display 20 and in Figure 9, a reminder notification 152 overlaid on a TV program.

Regarding claim 27, Lawler discloses in Figure 9, a program reminder system that displays a TV program reminder in a window prior to the beginning of a program and tunes to the program once a user presses a button 70 on the remote control (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 28, Lawler discloses that the user presses a button 70 on the remote control to tune to the programming (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 29, Lawler discloses that the user presses a button 70 on the remote control to tune to the programming (column 13, lines 1-6), and analog or digital decoder is used to tune and decode the picture (column 6, lines 7-23).

Regarding claim 30, Lawler discloses a program reminder system that displays a reminder to a user several minutes before each designated program is to start (column 12, lines 53-63).

Regarding claim 31, Lawler discloses in Figure 6, a program guide with a reminder button 140 which a user uses to create a future program reminder event (column 13, lines 7-16).

Regarding claim 32, Lawler discloses in Figure 6, a program guide calendar which a user may use to set a reminder to watch a show in the future by pressing a remind button 140.

Regarding claim 33, Lawler discloses a program reminder system in which a user designates a program which they are interested in, retrieves program information related to that program, and prior to the program broadcast, a reminder signal is sent to the user to notify the user of the program broadcast (column 10-line 60-column 11, line 17, 30-39, column 12, 35-55). Hendricks discloses a EPG and reminder system which retrieves program information from the headend, a user selects a program which they wish to record (Figure 15), the recording information is stored locally to later be sent to a VCR, prior to the recording time a reminder screen (Figure 22) is displayed (column 33, lines 34-58, column 40, lines 55-column 41, line 60). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify Lawler to store the

reminder information locally as taught by Hendricks thereby allowing a user to view a reminder and watch a program even if the network connection between a STB and the headend is severed.

Regarding claim 34, Lawler discloses a program reminder system, which a user tunes to a new channel in response to the program reminder notification (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 38, Lawler discloses in Figure 7, that if the remind button is not currently activated, the system monitors whether or not the record button has been activated in step 346, if not, it will display the record options menu at step 350 (column 13, lines 6-48).

Regarding claims 40, 50, and 54 Lawler discloses in Figure 2, a CPU 58 inside of STB 18 which controls display 20 (column 5, lines 58-column 6, line 6).

Regarding claims 41, 42, 51, 52, 55 and 56, Lawler discloses that the STB is controlled via an IR remote control 22 (column 5, lines 58-column 6, line 6). Remote control 22 inherently contains a processor in order to interpret user input into commands to transmit via the infrared spectrum.

Claims 8, 11-18, 21, 22, and 35-37, 39, 43-48, 53 and 57-60 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,699,107 to Lawler in view of U.S. Patent 5,583,560 to Florin and U.S. Patent 5,990,927 to Hendricks.

Regarding claims 8, 11, 39, and 43-45, Lawler discloses a program reminder system in Figures 4 and 6, in which a user selects a TV program from a program guide

which they wish to view at a later date via remind button 140 or cancel button 132, the program guide provides descriptive information on the program, five seconds before the program's start time a reminder is generated in a window which is placed over the currently watched program (Figure 9, column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63). Lawler does not disclose a system in which the reminder notification appears during a commercial advertisement or storing the reminder information locally. Hendricks discloses a EPG and reminder system which retrieves program information from the headend, a user selects a program which they wish to record (Figure 15), the recording information is stored locally to later be sent to a VCR, prior to the recording time a reminder screen (Figure 22) is displayed (column 33, lines 34-58, column 40, lines 55-column 41, line 60). Florin discloses a system in which a flashing icon 400 appears on a TV screen (Figure 44) during an advertisement which when selected provides more information to the user regarding the advertised product (column 23, line 45-column 24, line 20). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify Lawler to use the on screen icon of Florin for selecting a program viewing reminder and storing that information locally and issuing a record command as taught by Hendricks for later viewing thus providing a number of impulse program choices to a user.

Regarding claim 12, Lawler discloses a program reminder system which provides a second reminder five seconds before the program's start time which is overlaid over the currently watched program (Figure 9); the user can then tune to the program action

button 70 if they are interested in viewing the program (column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63, column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 13, Lawler discloses a program reminder system which provides a second reminder five seconds before the program's start time which is overlaid over the currently watched program (Figure 9, column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63).

Regarding claim 14, Lawler discloses in Figure 2 an action key 70 that is used by a subscriber to select a television program (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 15, see claim 14.

Regarding claim 16, Lawler discloses in Figure 2 an action key 70 that is used by a subscriber to select a television program and tunes to the proper channel (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 17, see claim 13.

Regarding claim 18, Lawler discloses in Figure 2 an action key 70 that is used by a subscriber to select a television program (column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 21, Lawler discloses a program reminder system which provides a second reminder five seconds before the program's start time which is overlaid over the currently watched program (Figure 9); the user can then tune to the program action button 70 if they are interested in viewing the program (column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63, column 13, lines 1-6). Lawler does not disclose a system in which the reminder notification appears during a commercial advertisement or storing the reminder information locally. Hendricks discloses a EPG and reminder system which retrieves program information from the headend, a user selects a program which they wish to

record (Figure 15), the recording information is stored locally to later be sent to a VCR, prior to the recording time a reminder screen (Figure 22) is displayed (column 33, lines 34-58, column 40, lines 55-column 41, line 60). Florin discloses a system in which a flashing icon 400 appears on a TV screen (Figure 44) during an advertisement which when selected provides more information to the user regarding the advertised product (column 23, line 45-column 24, line 20). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify Lawler to use the on screen icon of Florin for selecting a program viewing reminder and storing that information locally as taught by Hendricks for later viewing thus providing a number of impulse program choices to a user.

Regarding claim 22, Lawler discloses in Figure 9, a program reminder system that superimposes a program-viewing window over the currently watched program. Regarding claim 35, Lawler discloses a program reminder system which provides a second reminder five seconds before the program's start time which is overlaid over the currently watched program (Figure 9); the user can then tune to the program action button 70 if they are interested in viewing the program (column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63, column 13, lines 1-6). Lawler does not disclose a system in which the reminder notification appears during a commercial advertisement or storing the reminder information locally. Hendricks discloses a EPG and reminder system which retrieves program information from the headend, a user selects a program which they wish to record (Figure 15), the recording information is stored locally to later be sent to a VCR, prior to the recording time a reminder screen (Figure 22) is displayed (column 33, lines

Art Unit: 2611

34-58, column 40, lines 55-column 41, line 60). Florin discloses a system in which a flashing icon 400 appears on a TV screen (Figure 44) during an advertisement which when selected provides more information to the user regarding the advertised product (column 23, line 45-column 24, line 20). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify Lawler to use the on screen icon of Florin for selecting a program viewing reminder and storing that information locally as taught by Hendricks for later viewing thus providing a number of impulse program choices to a user.

Regarding claim 36, Lawler discloses a program reminder system in Figures 4 and 6, in which a user selects a TV program from a program guide which they wish to view at a later date via remind button 140 or cancel button 132, the program guide provides descriptive information on the program, five seconds before the program's start time a reminder is generated in a window which is placed over the currently watched program (Figure 9, column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63). Lawler does not disclose a system in which the reminder notification appears during a commercial advertisement or storing the reminder information locally. Hendricks discloses a EPG and reminder system which retrieves program information from the headend, a user selects a program which they wish to record (Figure 15), the recording information is stored locally to later be sent to a VCR, prior to the recording time a reminder screen (Figure 22) is displayed (column 33, lines 34-58, column 40, lines 55-column 41, line 60). Florin discloses a system in which a flashing icon 400 appears on a TV screen (Figure 44) during an advertisement which when selected provides more information to the user regarding the advertised product

Art Unit: 2611

(column 23, line 45-column 24, line 20). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify Lawler to use the on screen icon of Florin for selecting a program viewing reminder and storing that information locally as taught by Hendricks for later viewing thus providing a number of impulse program choices to a user.

Regarding claim 37, Lawler discloses a program reminder system which provides a second reminder five seconds before the program's start time which is overlaid over the currently watched program (Figure 9); the user can then tune to the program action button 70 if they are interested in viewing the program (column 12, lines 35-43, 53-63, column 13, lines 1-6).

Regarding claim 46 and 58, Lawler discloses in Figure 2, a CPU 58 inside of STB 18 which controls display 20 (column 5, lines 58-column 6, line 6).

Regarding claims 47, 48, 59 and 60, Lawler discloses that the STB is controlled via an IR remote control 22 (column 5, lines 58-column 6, line 6). Remote control 22 inherently contains a processor in order to interpret user input into commands to transmit via the infrared spectrum.

Regarding claims 53 and 57, Lawler discloses in Figure 2, a set top box 18 with an analog decoder 42 for decoding broadcast TV, a network communication interface 56 for decoding control signals from the headend, a CPU 58 which delivers or requests information to/from the headend and controls selection of programming as well as the program guide (column 6, lines 7-31) column 7, lines 8-16). Lawler and Florin do not disclose storing the reminder locally. Hendricks discloses a EPG and reminder system

Art Unit: 2611

which retrieves program information from the headend, a user selects a program which they wish to record (Figure 15), the recording information is stored locally to later be sent to a VCR, prior to the recording time a reminder screen (Figure 22) is displayed (column 33, lines 34-58, column 40, lines 55-column 41, line 60). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to modify Lawler to store the reminder information locally as taught by Hendricks thereby allowing a user to view a reminder and watch a program even if the network connection between a STB and the headend is severed.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Art Unit: 2611

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hunter B. Lonsberry whose telephone number is 703-305-3234. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday normal business hours.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Faile can be reached on 703-305-4380. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-5359 for regular communications and 703-872-9314 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-306-0377.

HBL
November 4, 2002



ANDREW FAILE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600